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best through it may we keep fine-tempered and resilient our American tongue.

One word I would add in closing. There is a sorry *ad prejudicium* fallacy in the description of Latin as 'dead'. Languages which have great thoughts expressed in them do not die, and Latin has had two great periods, the Classical and the Mediaeval, when it was the vehicle of great thoughts<sup>3</sup>. Its lives, indeed, are as many as the wide human interests which its letters have touched, and law, politics, and religion are but a few of its vivifications. Even Latin teachers sometimes overlook the range and currency of their subject's vitality; and this, I fear, is a fault; for at least in their day the life of the language is in their hands; it is through them that Latin lives.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA HARTLEY BURR ALEXANDER

### PROFESSOR ALEXANDER'S LETTERS TO TEACHERS

Professor Alexander is head of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Nebraska. In THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 7. 33-35 I printed an abstract, with comments, of an article by him, entitled Youth and the Classics, which appeared in the Nebraska State Journal, September 17, 1913. In 1919, Dr. Alexander published, through The Open Court Publishing Company, Chicago, a volume entitled Letters to Teachers and Other Papers of the Hour (pages vii + 256). Parts of this book are distinctly of interest and profit to teachers of the Classics. One of the letters bears the caption The Humanities (55-63). In Part II, Dr. Alexander discusses Foreign Language Study (169-189). He would himself have foreign languages studied because they minister so decidedly to education. There are two kinds of knowledge—knowledge of men and knowledge of nature, or, to put it differently, knowledge of human thought, and knowledge of the human environment. For knowledge of men we must turn, he says, to the humanities. The humanities mean a knowledge of books. The Liberal College aims, or tries to aim, to open up the privilege of books, not of any and every book, but of the best books. Here it is worth while to quote Dr. Alexander's exact words (173-175):

. . . Many of these (and may the praise of posterity long be to their makers!) are in the English tongue, by right of creation; but many more are in other languages, languages which must be learned—*partially*, as languages are always learned—in order that they may be partially understood. I know, of course, that the English-speaking world is now rich in translations of foreign masterpieces, and many of them superb translations; and I know that a very great treasure may be derived from the study of these works in translation: if any question this, one need but mention King James's Version, and he is answered. But it is also true, as everyone who has ever really caught the spirit of a foreign tongue will attest, that at the best a translation is but a pale reflection of its original; or if (as at times happens) it better the original, it is essentially another

work. It is hard to say this convincingly; but if we accept Lord Bryce's criterion, that the best judge is the man who has first made the acquaintance of a work in translation and has afterwards learned to know it in the original, we shall discover that the testimony to the worth of the effort is virtually unanimous.

Nor should it be necessary to repeat the obvious in saying that we do not make acquaintance with the ideas expressed in a foreign tongue merely for their formal (or, as a scholastic might say it, their intellectual) value; the power of a conception comes from the vigor of the context in which it is set, and a main part of that context is inevitably conveyed by the color of its native dialect. Philosophy, because it seeks the universal, should suffer less than other types of literature from this defect; but even in Jowett's splendid English something of his natural glory is faded from Plato.

It is for the sake of literature, and knowledge of literature, that we encourage the study of foreign languages as an essential part of a humanistic education; nor has the study any other justification besides knowledge of literature which will perpetuate it beyond the bare limits of practical necessity. But it needs no other. Literature—imaginative, political, historical, philosophical—is a thing of such supreme importance to civilization that every effort and every premium we can give to the cultivation of its tradition is but small measure of its value; and I mean by this value, not merely its return to the individual who acquires the knowledge, but its far richer returns to the whole society in which that individual lives. Colleges exist for the training of literate citizens, for the reason that literate citizens are indispensable to the good state.

Having thus considered in its general aspect the question of foreign language study in the Schools and Colleges, Dr. Alexander then proceeds, on pages 176-189, to consider "what languages are most economical, yielding the surest return for the effort expended. . .". Of the foreign languages, he puts Latin first. For this he advances several reasons:

. . . it is certainly easier to get effective preparatory teaching in Latin than in modern languages. . . . a small acquaintance with Latin is of more general value than is a small acquaintance with any other language. . . so that, on the whole, if but a single year could be devoted to language study Latin by all means is the language to recommend. . . . No sane critic will deny that for aesthetic and philosophical value alone no literature equals the Greek; nor will any sound critic question the fact that Latin owns a similar primacy in the domain of history and politics, while it may be regarded as a strong rival for the second place with respect to artistic and philosophical significance. It is probable that even now there are more books and documents in Latin than in any other language, taking the world over; and Latin possesses the unique value of opening to the student two of the greatest periods of human history—the period of pagan and imperial Rome and the great period of mediaeval Christianity.

C. K.

### BOETHIUS'S CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH LITERATURE DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Scholars who are familiar with Boethius's Consolation of Philosophy well know its importance in the world's literature during both the earlier and the later Middle Ages. In King Alfred, Boethius found a sympathetic interpreter and an ardent admirer. The

<sup>3</sup>On this theme reference may be made to a summary, with comments, THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 5.33-34, 41-42, of a paper by Professor J. P. Postgate, *Dead Language and Dead Languages*. c. k.

profound indebtedness of Dante to Boethius cannot be questioned. The influence of the *Consolation* on Chaucer, the man and the poet, has recently been studied by Dr. B. L. Jefferson in his volume, *Chaucer and the Consolation of Philosophy of Boethius* (1917). The centuries following closely upon Chaucer preserved the interest in Boethius, but it has been too generally supposed that little or no interest was shown in the *Consolation of Philosophy* during the eighteenth century.

Four translations, however, were produced in this century: by William Causton (1730), Rev. Philip Ridpath (1785), Robert Duncan (1789), and an anonymous writer (1792). Aside from these translations, evidence of an interest in the *Consolation* during the eighteenth century is not lacking. It seems to have been Dr. Samuel Johnson who was chiefly responsible for discerning at that time the lasting value of the *Consolation* to mankind; or, we should perhaps say, more precisely, Dr. Johnson and those associated with him in the Literary Club. James Harris, Oliver Goldsmith, Thomas Warton, Walter Harte, Gibbon, Johnson, and Mrs. Piozzi are the writers who enliven the study of Boethius in the eighteenth century.

James Harris (1709-1780), author of the *Philosophical Arrangements* (1775), and of *Hermes*, or a *Philosophical Inquiry Concerning Universal Grammar* (1751), was so familiar with the *Consolation* that he employs in corroboration of his statements not the simpler and more frequently quoted passages, but the deeper and more philosophical parts of this work. The *Philosophical Arrangements*, as well as the *Hermes*, abounds with references to Boethius and the *Consolation*. Dr. Johnson seems to have respected the scholarship of Harris, though calling him "a prig and a bad prig". Both men nevertheless have left a record of the high esteem in which they held Book 3, Meter 9, of the *Consolation*. Johnson, as is indicated below, rendered this meter as a motto for No. 7 of *The Rambler*, and Harris, in a note in the *Philosophical Arrangements* to a quotation from the Meter, says that the lines "for harmony of numbers and sublimity of sentiment are perhaps not inferior to any in the Latin language".

Although Goldsmith (1728-1774) nowhere makes direct mention of the *Consolation*, from certain passages in *An Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning*, and in the *Citizen of the World*, we know that he was acquainted with Boethius. That he had the *Consolation* in mind when writing the twenty-ninth chapter of the *Vicar of Wakefield* appears at least probable. It is true that Goldsmith there dismisses philosophy in favor of religion as a consolation for his prisoners, and it is possible that he, like Johnson, as recorded by Dr. Maxwell, may have thought it strange that Boethius in such a situation should be more philosopher than Christian. From the passage in the *Citizen of the World* (Letter LXXXIV), however, it seems that Goldsmith, like Boswell, may have made the mistake of thinking of Boethius only as a poet.

Thomas Warton (1728-1790), on the other hand, has left abundant evidence of his familiarity with the work

of Boethius. His *History of English Poetry* (1774-1781) contains many references to the *Consolation* and Boethius. He not only writes concerning Boethius and his famous work, but again and again sees the influence of Boethius working in the writings of others. In one passage (2.64) he says: "I must add that it was Boethius' admired allegory on the *Consolation of Philosophy* which introduced personification into the poetry of the Middle Ages".

Next to Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Piozzi, Walter Harte (1709-1774), the poet, and the intimate friend of Pope, appears to have recognized the beauty and the truth of Boethius's *Consolation*. Harte gives an abstract, chiefly of the first three Books of the *Consolation*, in his poem entitled *Boethius: or the Upright Statesman*, a supposed epistle from Boethius to his wife Rusticiana. In a short account of the life of Boethius and of the history of his chief work, Harte mentions the translations of Alfred, Chaucer, Walton, Elizabeth, and Preston, and he then quotes from Genesis 39.5:

'And it came to pass from the time that he <Potiphar> had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house and in the field'.

Thus it was, Harte maintains, with Theodoric and Boethius. Finally, in an introduction of sixteen lines, addressed to Lord Edward Eliot, Harte requests the latter to "hear what Boethius to his consort writes", and exhorts him to

Mark well the man, and heav'n thy labour bless;  
In all be like him, but unhappiness.

Throughout the argument Harte speaks in praise of Boethius and the *Consolation*. He does not doubt that Boethius had two wives, at first Helves, a Sicilian<sup>1</sup>, and later, Rusticiana. He believes the philosopher to have been not only a Christian, but an orthodox Christian. In the light of this it is not astonishing that he sees the parallel between Joseph and Boethius.

Gibbon praises the *Consolation of Philosophy* as "a golden volume not unworthy of the leisure of Plato or Tully". He gives an account of Boethius such as few have endeavored to improve<sup>2</sup>.

Of the greatest significance is the interest taken by Johnson (1709-1784) in the *Consolation*. It was in 1738 that he first advised his friend, Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, "to undertake a translation of *Boethius de Cons.*, because there is prose and verse, and to put her name to it when published"<sup>3</sup>. The advice, however, was not followed. Boswell, regretting that Johnson himself did not undertake the work, calls attention to the motto to No. 7 of *The Rambler*, referred to above, as illustrating how well he might have "executed a translation of this philosophical poet". Johnson took the first two and the last four lines of Book 3, Meter 9, as his motto:

<sup>1</sup>Harte refers to Edward Phillips, who speaks of Helves as the wife of Boethius, in the *Theatrum Poetarum* (1665), 222-224. <sup>2</sup>201-202 (edition of 1898).

<sup>3</sup>Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (edited by Arnold Glover, London, 1901), 1.81-82 (= 1.121, in the edition published by Messrs. J. M. Dent and Co., London, 1897).

O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas,  
 terrarum caelique sator! . . .  
 disice terrenae nebulas et pondera molis,  
 atque tuo splendore mica! Tu namque serenum,  
 tu requies tranquilla piis. Te cernere finis,  
 principium, vector, dux, semita, terminus, idem.

And he rendered them thus:

O thou whose power o'er moving world presides,  
 Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides,  
 On darkling man in pure effulgence shine,  
 And cheer the clouded mind with light divine.  
 'Tis thine alone to calm the pious breast,  
 With silent confidence and holy rest;  
 From thee, great God, we spring, to thee we tend,  
 Path, motive, guide, original, and end.

But this is not the only instance of Johnson's familiarity with the Consolation. In *The Idler*, No. 69, writing of the modes of translation in the progress of English literature, he speaks of Chaucer's version of "the *Comjorts of Philosophy*", the book which "seems to have been the favorite of the Middle Ages", and adds:

It may be supposed that Chaucer would apply more than common attention to an author of so much celebrity, yet he has attempted nothing higher than a version strictly literal, and has degraded the poetical parts to prose, that the constraints of versification might not obstruct his zeal for fidelity.

The Rev. Dr. Maxwell, for many years the social friend of Johnson, recalls hearing him speak of Boethius; upon which occasion Johnson expressed his surprise "that upon such a subject, and in such a situation, he should be *magis philosophus quam Christianus*"<sup>4</sup>. Yet more important, though evidently unknown to Boswell (at least he makes no mention of it), is the joint performance of Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Piozzi in 1765, as described by Mrs. Piozzi in the quotation given below.

Before proceeding to Mrs. Piozzi, however, I am including a meter, the sole work of Johnson, as an example of the eight meters found in Mrs. Piozzi's Letters to and from the Late Samuel Johnson (1788), and asserted to be the result of their endeavors (Book 2, Meter 2):

Though countless as the grains of sand  
 That roll at Eurus' loud command,  
 Though countless as the lamps of night  
 That glad us with vicarious light,  
 Fair Plenty, gracious queen shou'd pour  
 The blessings of a golden show'r,  
 Not all the gifts of Fate combin'd  
 Would ease the hunger of the mind,  
 But swallowing all the mighty store,  
 Rapacity would call for more;  
 For still where wishes most abound  
 Unquenched the thirst of gain is found;  
 In vain the shining gifts are sent,  
 For none are rich without content.

With Mrs. Piozzi (1741-1821) this brief survey closes. She is one of the most interesting translators of the Consolation. A. Hayward twice refers to the work of Mrs. Piozzi on Boethius, both as the partner of Dr. Johnson, and as an independent translator.

<sup>4</sup>Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, I. 418 (= 2.318, in the Dent edition: see note 3).

Speaking of her learning, in connection with Johnson, he says:

So far from making light of her scholarship, <Johnson> frequently accepted her as a partner in translations from the Latin. The translations from Boethius, printed in the second volume of the *Letters*, are their joint composition<sup>5</sup>.

How this work was accomplished is best told in the words of Mrs. Piozzi herself.

The verse from Boethius will be accepted as a literary rarity; it was about the year 1765 when our Doctor told me that he would translate the Consolations of Philosophy, but said, I must do the Odes for him, and produce one every Thursday: he was obeyed; and in commending some, and correcting others, about a dozen Thursdays passed away. Of those which are given here however, he did many entirely himself; and of the others I suffered my own lines to be printed, that his might not be lost. The work was broken off without completion, because some gentleman, whose name I have forgotten, took it in hand; and against him, for reasons of delicacy, Johnson did not chuse to contend<sup>6</sup>.

I should suggest, for want of a better candidate, that Walter Harte was the gentleman for whom Johnson gave up his translation. Johnson and Mrs. Piozzi were engaged in their work on Boethius about 1765-1766; Harte's poem, Boethius, in which he gives the substance of the first three books of the Consolation in paraphrase, appeared in 1767. According to Boswell, Johnson much commended Harte as a scholar, and as "a man of the most companionable talents he had ever known".

One meter only is preserved of the work of Mrs. Piozzi alone. To gain a fair estimate of her ability one must read the meters in the combined efforts of herself and Dr. Johnson. Of the translation here given, at the close of this paper, Hayward says<sup>7</sup>:

She has written on the last leaf<sup>8</sup>, "Book 3rd, Metre 7, being completely my own, I would not print, though Dr. Johnson commended my doing it so well, and said he could not make it either more close or more correct".

I give, in conclusion, the verses of Mrs. Piozzi, referred to in the preceding paragraph:

That pleasure leaves a parting pain  
 Her veriest votaries maintain;  
 Soon she deposits all her sweets,  
 Soon like the roving bee retreats,  
 Hasty, like her, she mounts on wing,  
 And, like her, leaves th' envenomed sting.

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA      GUY BAYLEY DOLSON

#### NEW PUBLICATIONS ON POMPEII

The interest and importance of the buried Campanian city show no signs of diminishing in the course of the years: on the contrary its significance increases with the improvement in our apparatus and methods of study. The work accomplished in 1910-1919 was summarised

<sup>5</sup>Autobiography, Letters, and Literary Remains of Mrs. Piozzi, I. 47.

<sup>6</sup>Letters to and from the Late Samuel Johnson, I. vi (London, 1788).

<sup>7</sup>A. Hayward, *Autobiography, Letters and Literary Remains of Mrs. Piozzi*, I. 324.

<sup>8</sup>Of the second volume of Letters: evidently of the copy that Hayward possessed, since nothing of the kind appears in the copy in the Library of Harvard University that I have used.